

## Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-04 COME-00 AID-05 IGA-01 DOTE-00 L-01

CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 LAB-01 STR-01

SP-02 /030 W

----- 106875

R 241344Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6534

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EWWT, NI

SUBJ: PORT DETENTION SURCHARGE: LAGOS/APAPA, NIGERIA

REFS: A) LAGOS 7338

B) LAGOS 8687

C) LAGOS 9442

SUMMARY: CONTRARY TO EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENTS IN REFTELS, PORT CONGESTION IN LAGOS/APAPA HAS NOT EASED BUT HAS BECOME MUCH WORSE. LOCAL SOURCES ATTRIBUTE PROBLEM TO MANY FACTORS, BUT PRIMARILY TO QUOTE FREAK UNQUOTE BUNCHING OF SHIPS CALLING AT LAGOS/APAPA OVER PAST 4-5 WEEKS. BASED ON REPORTS FROM THESE SOURCES, WE BELIEVE SITUATION HAS NOW REACHED POINT WHERE SERIOUS CONGESTION CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE FOR AT LEAST 7-8 MORE WEEKS. END SUMMARY.

1. NEW SURGE OF CONGESTION REPORTED DURING LATE SEPTEMBER, EARLY OCTOBER PERIOD (REF. C), INSTEAD OF ABATING, HAS DEVELOPED TO EMERGENCY PROPORTIONS. THIS WEEK, (OCT. 21-26) UPWARDS OF 40 SHIPS CAN BE OBSERVED WAITING TO ENTER BERTH, AND DELAY TIME FOR SHIPS OFFLOADING CARGO HAS HIT 25 DAYS. TRADE SOURCES SEE SITUATION GETTING WORSE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER, AND EXPECT HEAVY CONGESTION TO CONTINUE AT LEAST 7-8 WEEKS BEFORE RETURN TO NORMAL CONDITIONS.

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2. MAIN FACTOR CITED IN PRESENT SITUATION IS EXTRAORDINARILY LARGE NUMBER OF SHIPS CALLING AT LAGOS/APAPA IN LAST 4-5 WEEKS. PORT AUTHORITIES ATTRIBUTE THIS QUOTE BUNCHING UNQUOTE TO CHRISTMAS RUSH AND PORT LABOR STOPPAGES IN ACCRA AND LIVERPOOL, BUT ONE AUTHORITATIVE TRADE SOURCE BELIEVES IT IS FOR MOST PART A QUOTE FREAK UNQUOTE OCCURRENCE DUE PARTLY TO LACK OF COORDINATED SCHEDULING AMONG SHIPPING CONFERENCES. IN ADDITION TO BUNCHING OF SHIPS, SOURCES CITE PROLONGED SUMMER RAINS (WHICH HAVE CONTINUED BEYOND NORMAL ENDING DATES), SHORTAGE OF PILOTS, AND MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN OF PORT-OWNED TUGS.

3. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ANYTHING PORTS AUTHORITY CAN DO NOW WILL SIGNIFICANTLY RELIEVE SITUATION. ANNOUNCED PLAN TO INSTITUTE 24-HOUR SHIFTS IN WAREHOUSES WILL NOT HAVE EFFECT ON MAIN BOTTLENECK, WHICH IS OFFLOADING OF CARGO. IT APPEARS THAT CONGESTION WILL HAVE TO WORK ITSELF OUT GRADUALLY, AND THIS WILL TAKE TIME.

4. WE NOW HAVE REPORTS THAT A NUMBER OF SHIPPING CONFERENCES ARE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING APPLICATION OF SURCHARGE, INCLUDING CONTINENTAL WEST AFRICA CONFERENCE (COWAC) WHICH HAS SUBSTANTIAL TRAFFIC HERE. LOCAL PRESS ITEM, UNSUBSTANTIATED, CITES FIGURE OF .33-1/3 PERCENT BEING CONSIDERED BY QUOTE SHIPPING COMPANIES UNQUOTE. UK-WEST AFRICA CONFERENCE (UKWAC) UNLIKELY TO APPLY SURCHARGE, HOWEVER, SINCE IT HAS SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT ALLOWING PRIORITY ACCESS TO ONE OF THE BERTHS, AND WOULD NOT WANT TO JEOPARDIZE IT.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PORT CONGESTION, LABOR STRIKES, CARGO SHIPS  
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**Draft Date:** 24 OCT 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** shawdg  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Date:** 28 AUG 2002  
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**TAGS:** EWWT, NI  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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